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DECORATION & FURNITURE

A MEDLEY OF CHURCH DECORATION.

IT is probable that the interior of Trinity Church in Boston has now reached its final condition, although the last change that has been made has thrown everything once more out of keeping. The three stained-glass lights by La Farge, which have just been put in place at the end of the nave, while separately very fine examples of modern work in stained glass, may be said to add so much to the church as to suggest that it would better be taken down and rebuilt on a larger scale. They have the effect that Mr. Aronson's orchestra of fifty strong-lunged German performers might have, if it were introduced in a parlor concert. They do not "hang together" very well among themselves. The central narrow, round-topped window is almost filled by a colossal figure of Christ copied from a drawing by John Bellini. In the original this figure is rather tall, but it has been found necessary, in order to squeeze it into the narrow space available, to "skimp" the draperies as much as possible, so that, in the copy, it has the proportions of a bean-pole. At that, it does not quite get into the framework. The effect is either startling or ludicrous according to the observer's mood. The big and awkward figure seems to be shouldering its way into the church with a force which appears to threaten destruction to the building. The comparative weakness of the purely ornamental portion of the composition adds to this impression. The other lights of the same size, one on each side, are filled, in the space corresponding with that occupied by the Christ in the middle one, with masses of blue bulls'-eyes divided by pillars of Mexican onyx which carry canopies of Byzantine design similar to that which fills the top of the central light. The emptiness of these contrasts painfully with the crowded look of the principal opening. In color, however, the whole arrangement is extraordinarily rich and strong so as to reduce to a rather low tone the Pompeian reds and other bright tints of the walls, to say nothing of the other windows.

In the choice and arrangement of these ignorance has done its worst. The committee appears to have scoured the universe for examples of styles the most opposed, which they have brought together as if their object was to make of the church a museum in which every kind of modern stained glass might be found, so disposed that each work should bring out the defects of every other one. From the gigantic faults and the overpowering color of Mr. La Farge's window, one passes to the thin and watery pedantry of M. Oudinot, to the babyish prettiness of Mr. Morris and the harmonious but conventional quietism of Mr. Cot-

tier. If all the windows were filled either by Mr. Cottier or Mr. La Farge, whatever faults there might be would be atoned for by a certain relation between the glass and the other elements of the decorative scheme with which both of these gentlemen were concerned. But Mr. Morris's work is entirely out of place in any such edifice, and M. Oudinot's is in violent opposition to the whole scheme, if scheme it can be called, of the interior.

The wall and ceiling decoration of this church, of which so much has been written, done, as it was, in

agree to disagree. The church, as it now stands, is a monument of what to avoid in this regard and a perfect exemplar of the evils of eclecticism in architecture and decoration.

ROBERT JARVIS.

RELATIONS OF INTERIOR DECORATION WITH COSTUME AND COMPLEXION.

A GREAT deal has been said and written about the coloring of theatres; but, so far as coloring goes, the theorists, when they have differed from accepted practice founded on experience, have been wrong. Chevreul proves to his own satisfaction that crimson is a bad color for the interior of the boxes, as tending to give the complexion a tinge of the complementary green. He advocates a pale green, therefore, for the interior of the boxes as enhancing the rose tints of the complexion. He thinks that the fronts of the boxes have a much more remote effect in this respect; but that the cushions should be covered in green velvet. Mr. J. D. Crace, an English architect, declares, however, that experience tells that Chevreul is absolutely wrong from first to last; as he is, indeed, constantly wrong when he is discussing the effects of color on "complexion." In this very matter he appeals to results of experiments made on flat surfaces with uniform tints; and he is, therefore, in no position to judge of effects in which one color is in deep shadow, another in strong light, the object to be influenced being of quite uncertain quantity as to depth of complexion, color of costume, and degree of shade. Green lining to the boxes, and particularly green cushions on the front, would be fatal to four out of five complexions and costumes. There is no color at all equal to red—and especially red in shadow—for setting off to advantage a variety of complexions and costumes. The too red complexion is toned down by contrast; the pale borrows color by "sympathy"—a very important factor where the human face is concerned. Besides this, the shadows are all warmed by reflection, and it is cold shadows, not cool lights, which are detrimental

to a face. Then Chevreul underrates the value of the box-fronts as color. The arguments which he brings to bear on the interior are really applicable to these. Consequently a light color which shall not either be so light or so pure as to injure, by contrast, the whites of the costumes, and which shall yet set forth the coloring of the faces (which are in the same plane), will be found best. This may be relieved by gilding, and by neutral tints or colored ornament sufficiently broken up to afford only a neutral result—a soft and light contrast to the darker interior.

For rooms devoted to music or dancing, Mr. Crace



DECORATION FOR A PANEL OR PLAQUE. BY LEGRAIN. (SEE PAGE 22.)

a hurry, with an evident wish to make the most of the unique opportunity which (at the time it was undertaken) it presented, could hardly be otherwise than scrappy and inconsistent with itself. Still, in this it is no worse than the architecture with a tower taken from one old French church, a doorway from another, and a ridiculous little cloister which seems to have been picked up in a Nuremberg toy-shop. But there is a difference between getting your patchwork done all by one man and hiring it out to half-a-dozen different individuals, who cannot confer together, and, if they could, would have in the end to

points out that the conditions of coloring are not so similar to those for theatres as might at first appear. In the theatre the lighting of the audience is direct, the background being in shadow. In the ball-room or concert-room the light is to a great extent reflected from the walls, and will partake more or less of their tone, unless the sources of light are distributed pretty equally around the walls themselves. In a room hung with green silk, for instance, and lighted only, or mainly, by a central chandelier, all that side of the face which is in shade from the chandelier will be tinged with the green light reflected from the walls. It is, therefore, always desirable to distribute the sources of light, both to obviate these reflected tints, and to diminish all shadow. It is also very desirable to employ such tones of color as readily reflect light, and light rather warm than cold. It must, however, be remembered that many of the tints which are best for this, such as rather pure pale buffs, are apt to be very trying to portions of the costumes, especially to whites of transparent material, such as laces or gauzy fabrics, which against them become smoky in tone. A large preponderance of white (not too raw), with a liberal use of gilding, and some red (as drapery or otherwise) for the gilding to reflect, are always good. Probably no background is so effective for a ball-room as tapestry in pale tones of fairly pure color, which the texture of the fabric always softens below the coloring of the complexions or dresses. But in a public room so costly a decoration can rarely be expected. The beautiful variations of quiet tints exhibited by natural marbles are, again, admirable. If the cost allowed of it, Mr. Crace says he would desire nothing better than to have the lower walls, to a height of some six or seven feet, lined with various

marbles, and the upper walls in subdued white relieved with gilding, and divided at intervals with pilasters of colored marble. The draperies and portières should in this case be of rich and deep colors.

ing if the lighting is well distributed. The whites in this case may either be softened by tinting, or by some form of delicate arabesque ornament in mixed coloring painted thereon. The reds of the draperies must,

of course, be recalled, in somewhat reduced tone, in the decorations, either as margins, lines, or medallions, or by any means which may appear appropriate.

If the proportions of the room allow of it, a good system of decoration for a ball-room or concert-room would be one by which the color intended as background to the company would be carried only high enough to serve that purpose, and the larger surfaces of wall from which light would be reflected would be kept in light and somewhat warm tones.

In the case of smaller rooms used for similar purposes (only occasionally) in private houses, the great point to attend to is the even distribution of light. A wall with some depth of color, if not too gay, may be made a very effective background. But care must be taken, in that case, to light up the company, and not so much the walls. For a dinner-party, a dark wall, relieved with pictures, is much the most effective and becoming, because, the table being well lighted, the faces are all well lighted; the reflection from the white cloth prevents all heavy shadows on the features, and the dark background purifies the tones of the complexion. Moreover, the alternation of the black coats of the men performs the same service with very great advantage to the ladies at table.



DECORATION FOR A PANEL OR PLAQUE. BY LEGRAIN. (SEE PAGE 22.)

This again, however, is a costly decoration, and we should consider what is possible with moderate means. Very gray tones of green, broken up by soft white, and set off by reds in the draperies, are becom-

together of both pictorial art and stained glass has often been deprecated; but there is many a building containing both, from which it would be a loss to exclude either. It should be borne in mind, however,

In the decoration of churches, the employment

that the relative positions of stained glass and picture should be such that the tinted rays of sunlight would never, or rarely, fall directly on the painting. There should be a free use of white with the colored glass. The paintings should be pure in tone, and as simple and expressive as possible in drawing.

NOTES ON WOOD-CARVING.

THE carefully considered series of articles on practical wood-carving, by Calista Halsey Patchin, which appeared in the May, June, July and August numbers of *THE ART AMATEUR* of this year, leaves but little to be said on the subject. The following excerpts from the notes of Leo Parsey in our London contemporary, *Amateur Work*, however, are not without interest to the student:

It should always be borne in mind by the beginner that the more time and labor bestowed upon getting his tools into proper working order at first, the more satisfactory will his work appear when finished. The necessary labor required is of an extremely uninteresting nature, and is therefore apt to be carelessly and hurriedly performed, the beginner being anxious to commence the practical work at once. New tools of course require far more time and attention to bring them into working order than tools that have been previously used, and are simply dull and blunt. In the latter case five minutes' rubbing on the oil-stone, with a few finishing touches on the strap, will bring on a keen edge. New tools require, first of all, to be ground on a slow-cutting grindstone, care being taken to use plenty of water during the process, otherwise there is a danger of the tool becoming so heated as to draw or affect the temper. It is somewhat difficult to state exactly how far back from the edge of the tool the grinding should extend, as if taken too far back it leaves the edge too thin, but in most cases from one-eighth to one-fourth of an inch will be sufficient. After the tools have been ground, they require to be well rubbed out from the inside with a fast-cutting oil-stone. Arkansas or Washita stone is about the best for this purpose.

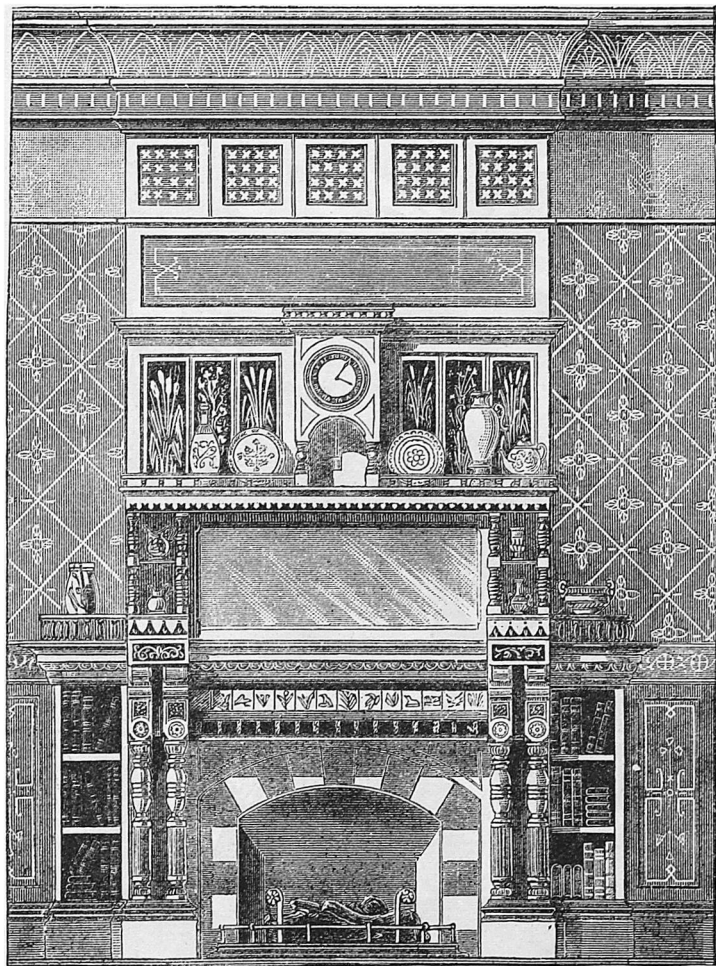
In sharpening the out-sides of tools the tool is held in the left hand, and the stone is moved sharply up and down the edge by the right hand, except in the case of very flat tools, when the stone can be placed on the bench, and both hands used to grasp the tool. Ordinary machine oil, or in some cases paraffine, is used as a lubricant, and to increase the cutting power of the stones, emery powder is sometimes added. To put a finishing

clean-cutting edge on the tools, a strap is used, and this can easily be made by the amateur. It consists simply of a strip of buff-leather—a piece of a soldier's cast-off

A good way of testing the keenness of the edge on a tool is to try it on a piece of soft pine, cutting across the grain, when, if the tool is properly sharpened, a clean cut, without any tearing of the grain, will be the result.

In many, if not in all, cases the absence of sandpaper affords a pretty sure test of the excellence of the work and the skill of the carver. The only purpose for which sandpaper is particularly useful is for mouldings and uncarved surfaces. English oak is not so useful for carving purposes as the stave-oak, it being much tougher, and frequently cross-grained, and although a first-class wood where strength and endurance are required, these qualities are not so much looked for as freedom in working. Next to stave-oak, which is not always easily obtained of a greater width than six or seven inches and three or four inches thick, may be ranked American walnut-wood. It is a free-cutting, straight-grained wood, generally free from knots, takes a stain well, and is easily polished. Lime-tree-wood is also a splendid wood for carving purposes, being easily worked, and without much grain; and it is perhaps the best of all woods to use where the work is intended to be either stained or gilded. Boxwood is mostly used for the finest and most delicate description of work, for which it is peculiarly suited, being a hard, compact wood; it is also extensively used for wood-engraving.

Ebony possesses nearly the same qualities as boxwood, and being naturally of a rich black color, is frequently used for fine carvings; it is, however, slightly brittle. Carved work in ebony looks better if left of a dull color instead of being brightly polished, especially if it be well brushed with a hard brush, the plain surfaces only (the



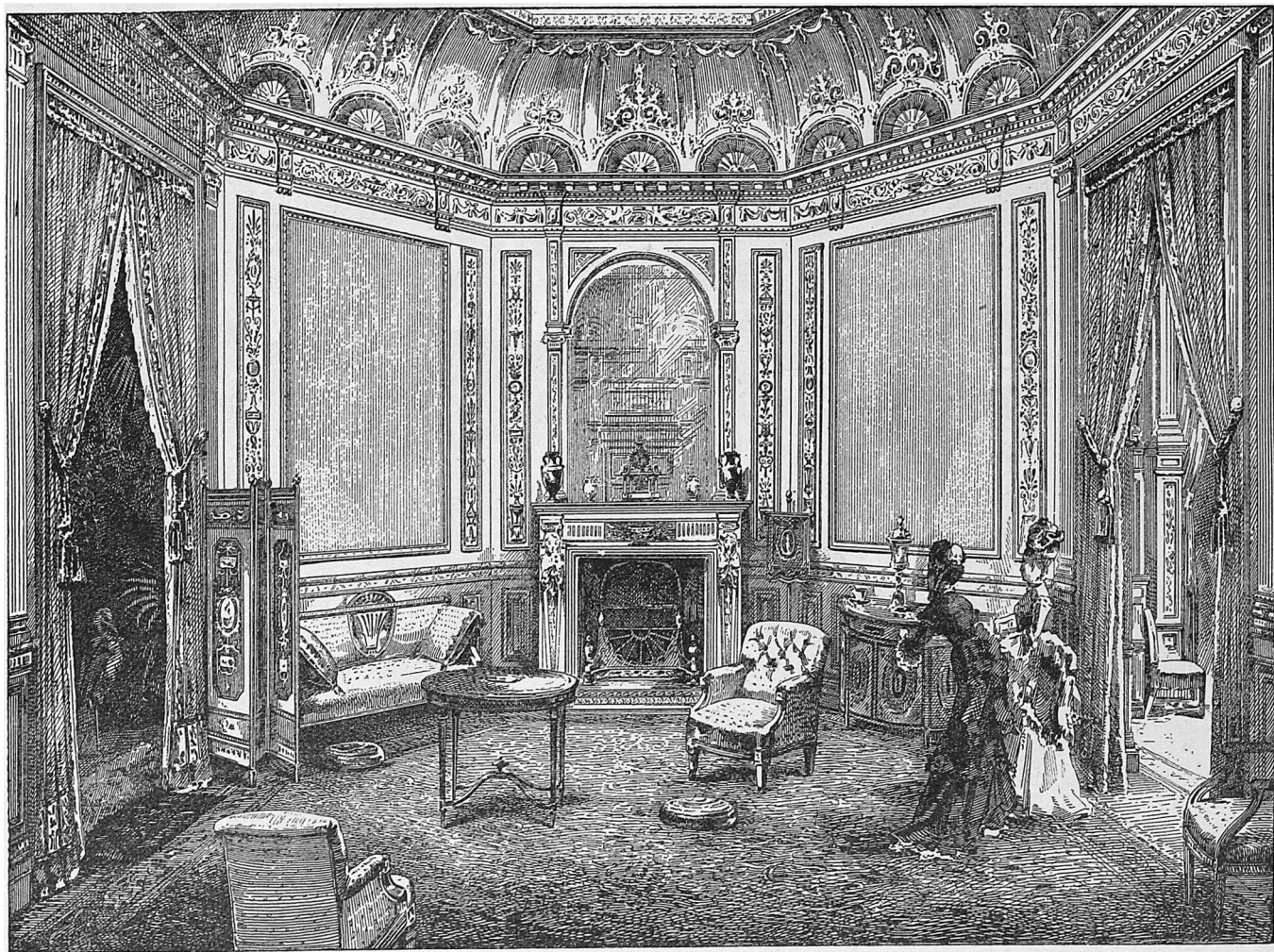
MODERN ENGLISH CHIMNEY-PIECE AND ACCESSORIES.

belt is best—about ten inches long and four inches wide, plentifully saturated with tallow and crocus powder, which should be well rubbed into the leather before a

mouldings in panels for example) being brightly polished, thus affording a good contrast with the dead color of the carving. Ebony is frequently used instead

of bog-oak, and I believe the majority of the elegant, tasteful articles of jewelry, such as shamrock bracelets and harp-shaped brooches, exposed for sale in most Irish towns, are far more frequently made of ebony than of bog-oak, as represented. Bog-oak is in most cases far too coarse in the grain for delicate carving, whereas ebony has all the requisite qualities.

If the carved work is intended to be in relief, then the carving is done first, the wood being afterward stained and gilded; but where incised work is intended, the



A MODERN PARISIAN BOUDOIR.

fire. When properly made, this strap will be found to give a keen edge to the tools, and by slightly doubling it the inside can be finished off as well as the outside.

wood is both stained and polished before the incising is done, the incised work being afterward gilded. This style of work looks remarkably well when the